

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 IO-13 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04

H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01

SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 AID-05 EB-07 OMB-01 /094 W

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R 150600Z MAY 77

FM AMEMBASSY SANA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1224

INFO AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY LONDON

C O N F I D E N T I A L SANA 1823

E.O. 11652: NGDS

TAGS: PINT, PINS, YE

SUBJECT: FUTURE INTERNAL POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS IN YEMEN

1. DURING MAY 12 WAR COLLEGE CALL FOREIGN MINISTER AL-ASNAJ INFORMED THE GROUP THAT PRESIDENT AL-HAMDI INTENDS TO MAKE AN IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT DURING THE JUNE 13 CELEBRATIONS MARKING THE THIRD ANNIVERSARY OF THE AL-HAMDI-LED COORECTION MOVEMENT IN 1974. AL-ASNAJ (PRIME MINISTERR ABD AL-GHANI ALSO MADE SIMILAR COMMENTS) SAID THAT THE REGIME INTENDS TO MOVE TOWARDS GENERAL ELECTIONS OVER THE COMING YEAR WHICH WILL RESULT IN THE ESTABLISHMENT OF SOME KIND OF POPULAR ASSEMBLY AND THEREBY RETURN TO YEMEN A MODICUM OF POPULAR PARTICIPATION IN THE GOVERNMENT.

2. AL-ASNAJ EMPHASIZED THAT THE AL-HAMDI REGIME SINCERELY WANTS TO SEE DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS TAKE ROOT IN YEMEN BUT THAT GIVEN YEMEN'S POLITICAL AND SOCIAL BACKWARDNESS, SUCH A TASK HAS NOT BEEN AND WILL NOT BE AN EASY ONE. AL-ASNAJ CONTINUED THAT THE POPULAR CONFERENCE WHICH WILL BE HELD IN JUNE IN HODIEDAH WILL HAVE THE RESPONSIBILITY TO DECIDE WHAT KIND OF SYSTEM YEMEN WILL HAVE, WHETHER IT WILL BE A PARLIAMENTARY OR PRESIDENTIAL TYPE OF GOVERNMENT AND HOW THE LEGIS-

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LATIVE FUNCTIONS WILL BE ORGANIZED. ONCE THESE BASIC DECISIONS ARE MADE, THEN YEMEN WILL MOVE INTO GENERAL ELECTIONS AND THE EVENTUAL FORMATION OF NEW GOVERNMENT.

3. COMMENT: THIS INFORMATION TIES IN WITH WHAT PRESIDENT AL-HAMDI TOLD ME A FEW NIGHTS AGO ABOUT HIS INTENTIONS FOR YEMEN'S FUTURE POLITICAL SYSTEM. BUT IS OBVIOUS THAT SOMETHING

IS BEING PLANNED BUT WE WILL JUST HAVE TO WAIT AND SEE WHAT
EVENTUALLY EMERGES FROM THE DISCUSSIONS AND BEHIND-THE-SCENES
MANEUVERINGS OF THE VARIOUS POLITICAL FORCES HERE. IN THIS
CONNECTION WE HAVE HEARD THAT ONE OF THE MAJOR STUMBLING
BLOCKS IN THE AL-AHMAR/AL-HAMDI RAPPROCHEMENT IS
THAT THE FORMER IS APPARENTLY NOT WILLING TO PROCEED WITH
ELECTIONS NOW BECAUSE THE RECENT CENSUS SHOWED LESS PEOPLE
IN THE NORTHERN ZAYDI REGIONS THAN IN THE SOUTHERN SHAFI
REGIONS AND AL-AHMAR REALIZES THE POSITION OF THE ZAYDI
SHAIKHS WILL BE MUCH WEAKER IN THE NEW MAJLIS AL-SHURA.
SCOTES

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